

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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12

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /158 W

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R 131612Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6735

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 1 7 3 2

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TO, IS

SUBJ: PRESIDENT EYADEMA WARNS ISRAEL OF POSSIBLE REVISION OF
TOGOLESE ATTITUDE

REF: LOME 1727

1. TOGO-PRESSE TODAY (13 SEPT) CARRIES PROMINENT FIRST PAGE
HEADLINE STATING PRESIDENT EYADEMA HAD INFORMED ISRAELI
AMBASSADOR OF TOGO'S CONCERN OVER PROLONGED OCCUPATION OF
ARAB TERRITORIES. ACCOMPANYING ARTICLE STATES PRESIDENT,
RECEIVING AMBASSADOR RASH YESTERDAY IN PRESENCE FOREIGN
MINISTER HUNLEDE AND HIS OWN DIRECTOR OF CABINET LACLE, EXPRESSED
TOGO'S CONCERN BASED ON ARGUMENT THAT ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO APPLY
SC RES 242, ACCEPTED BY ISRAEL AND ARABS, CONSTITUTED
DANGEROUS PRECEDENT FOR STRONG NATIONS IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH
WEAK ONES. ARTICLE ADDS PRESIDENT INSISTED TO RASH THAT EQUITABLE
SOLUTION MUST BE FOUND RAPIDLY IN ORDER TO PREVENT TOGO FROM
"HAVING TO CHANGE ITS POSITION VIS-A-VIS STATE OF ISRAEL."

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2. RASH CALLED ON ME THIS MORNING TO SEEK MY VIEWS ON PRESIDENT'S UNPRECEDENTED ACTION. (IN 3 YEARS HERE I HAVE NEVER KNOWN HIM TO PUBLICIZE IN SUCH MANNER A PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH AN AMBASSADOR.) RASH SAID NEWS ITEM WAS ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE, EXCEPT THAT PRESIDENT HAD NOT SAID TOGO MIGHT HAVE TO REVISE ITS POSITION. PRESIDENT HAD BEEN COURTEOUS AND FRIENDLY BUT HAD INSISTED THAT ISRAEL MUST EVACUATE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, SAYING ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO DO SO WAS PLACING TOGO IN "DIFFICULT POSITION." I TOLD RASH OF MY OWN MEETING WITH PRESIDENT (REFTEL).

3. COMMENT: MY VIEW, WHICH I DISCUSSED WITH RASH, IS AS FOLLOWS: FIRST, IT IS UNUSUAL FOR PRESIDENT, WHEN HE RECEIVES AMBASSADOR IN THIS TYPE OF AUDIENCE, TO HAVE OTHERS PRESENT. FACT HE HAD HUNLEDE AND LACLE THERE APPEARS TO INDICATE HE WANTED WITNESSES TO HIS DEMARCHE. WHY THIS WAS NECESSARY IS OBSCURE. SECONDLY, IT IS CLEAR FROM WHAT HE SAID TO ME ABOUT ARAB PRESSURES (REFTEL) THAT HE RESENTS THEM AND IT THUS SEEM APPARENT HE MADE HIS DEMARCHE IN SPITE OF HIS PERSONAL INCLINATION, RATHER THAN BECAUSE OF IT. AT SAME TIME HE IS UNDER ESPECIALLY SEVERE ECONOMIC PRESSURE THIS YEAR (GHANAIAN CRACKDOWN ON SMUGGLING AND POOR CROPS) AND IS NO DOUBT BEING PUSHED BY HIS ADVISERS, PROBABLY INCLUDING HUNLEDE AND LACLE, TO ACCOMMODATE HIMSELF TO ARAB DESIRES, ESPECIALLY LIBYAN, IN HOPES OF SIZEABLE CASH SUBSIDY. FINALLY, I BELIEVE, AND RASH AGREES, THAT PRESIDENT MAY NOW SIT BACK WHILE HE SEES WHETHER PARTIAL MEASURES, SUCH AS PUBLICIZING HIS DEMAND FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, WILL SATISFY LIBYANS. VISIT TO TRIPOLI NEXT MONTH (ALREADY RUMORED AND NOW CONFIRMED BY HIM TO RASH) WILL GIVE HIM OPPORTUNITY TO FIND OUT. I AM SURE HE HAS NO DESIRE TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL (HE HAS STUBBORN STREAK OF LOYALTY TO OLD FRIENDS) BUT NEITHER RASH NOR I RULES THIS OUT IF MEASURES TAKEN THUS FAR DO NOT PROVE FINANCIALLY FRUITFUL. DICKINSON

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